Accreditation Preparation Checklist for Early Steps in the Process

☐ Get a copy of the accreditation requirements
Obtain and review a copy of the accreditation requirements and standards for the accreditor(s) you are considering. Decide if the requirements are a good fit, not just in the ease of completion, but also by how much they can help your organization grow and improve.

☐ Calculate an estimate of accreditation fees
Contact the accrediting body(ies) being considered and request an estimate of fees. When calculating an annual fee, be sure to divide by 3 or 4, depending on the length of the accreditation cycle.

☐ Choose an accrediting body
As a part of your research, consider not just the cost, but the length of the process, how each specific accreditation will benefit your agency or organization, if that accreditation will help you reach the goals you have in mind, and how it will fit with—or enhance—your unique organization.

☐ Appoint an Accreditation Coordinator
Identify the individual who will act as the internal coordinator and liaison with the accrediting body. Normally this person will also head up an accreditation committee.

☐ Conduct a gap analysis
Once an accrediting body is chosen, dig into the accreditation requirements and, one by one, conduct a gap analysis. For the requirements that have not been met, figure out what is needed to “close the gap”.

☐ Close the gaps
Put new policies into place one by one until all the “gaps” are closed. It’s important to remember, though, to treat both the preparation period and the survey as learning opportunities that will help you become a better organization.

☐ Determine when to have an onsite survey take place
Consider whether a six-month demonstration of implementation of standards is required and well as any organizational or personal scheduling constraints.

☐ Submit the accreditation application and deposit